

The Berlin Wall: Symbol of a Divided Europe

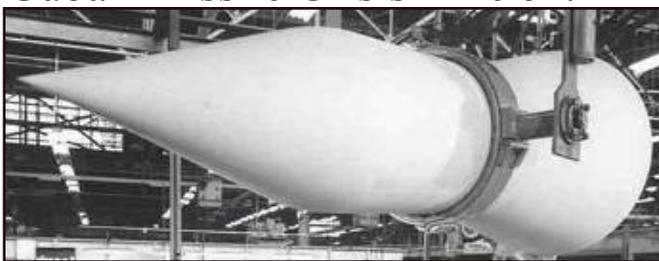
American Nuclear Test, 1954

What was the Cold War?

The Cold War began just after the end of World War II. Conflict arose between the United States and Soviet Union - the remaining superpowers - because of their different economic and political systems. The Soviet Union was based upon communism, while the United States promoted democratic capitalism. Neither side ever fought the other directly in a hot or “shooting war,” due to the looming threat of a nuclear war. Instead, each side tried to gain an advantage in a variety of ways. These included an intense political competition, economic rivalries, propaganda and a massive arms buildup.

The Arms Race

The buildup of nuclear weapons was one way the Cold War was fought. Between the opposing sides, over 80,000 nuclear weapons were constructed. While none of these were detonated in a hot war, over 1,800 tests were conducted. The arms race nearly led to World War III several times, such as the Berlin Crisis in 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.



Minuteman II Warhead: 1.2 Megatons of Destructive Force



Soviet SS-24 Missile: Held 10 Nuclear Warheads

At one point, the world’s nuclear stockpiles totaled a chilling 18,000 megatons. By comparison, the entire explosive force of all the bombs used during World War II was 2 megatons. Reflecting the impact these weapons could have on the world, former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara once said, “nuclear weapons have no military utility whatsoever, except to deter an enemy attack.”

Cold War Timeline

1945 - Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

1946 - Churchill gives Iron Curtain Speech

1949 - Soviet Union explodes atomic bomb

1952 - United States explodes hydrogen bomb

1953 - Soviet Union explodes hydrogen bomb

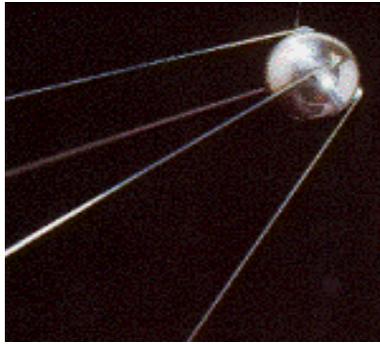
1956 - Khrushchev tells U.S. *"We will bury you."*

1957 - World's first satellite, Sputnik, launched by Soviet Union

1959 - Nikita Khrushchev visits USA



Destruction at Hiroshima



Sputnik satellite



Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev



Watching a missile test launch

1961 - Soviet Union places first man in space, Yuri Gagarin

1961 - Berlin Wall built

1962 - Cuban Missile Crisis

1962 - First Minuteman Missiles become active on October 27th

1969 - U.S. lands on moon

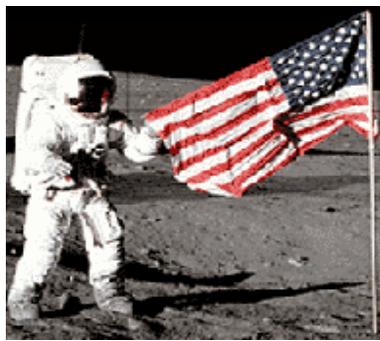
1972 - SALT I agreement signed - first treaty limiting nuclear arms

1972 - US President Richard Nixon visits Moscow

1975 - Soviet hydrogen bomb creator Andrei Sakharov gets Nobel Peace Prize



Minuteman Missile being placed in silo



U.S. moon landing in 1969



President Reagan's speech in Berlin



Signing of START Treaty in 1991

1983 - Reagan proposes Star Wars

1986 - Chernobyl nuclear powerplant meltdown disaster

1987 - Reagan gives "Tear Down that Wall" speech in Berlin

1989 - Berlin Wall comes down

1990 - Germany reunifies

1991 - START Treaty signed

1992 - Declaration of Cold War ending is signed by Russia and USA

1999 - Minuteman Missile National Historic Site designated

Minuteman Missile 2007 Summer Season

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historic Site
South Dakota



Ranger Jack Hanson leads visitors on tour of Launch Control Center Delta-01

Delta-09 Open
Each Weekday!

Launch Facility (missile silo) Delta-09 will be open to drive up visitation from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday until September 14th. Visitors will be able to view the Minuteman II training missile on display at this once operational silo. A ranger will also be stationed at the silo to answer any questions visitors might have about the site.

Take A
Virtual Tour

Minuteman Missile's 12 minute film gives visitors a virtual tour of both Launch Control Facility Delta-01 and Launch Facility Delta-09. Film highlights include a ranger led look inside the underground Launch Control Center. Shown on demand!